



Dear Citizens,

It is one of my goals as Mayor to move Baltimore forward towards a more prosperous future. The most critical piece of that progress is delivering a balanced budget every year. I am confident that this, my first budget as Mayor, is a realistic assessment of the city's revenues and represents the priorities of the people of Baltimore.

The \$2.65 billion budget proposed this month continues to provide property tax relief to residents who have accepted the challenge of living in Baltimore. The property tax rate cut will provide savings of \$70 for a home assessed at \$350,000. This is the third installment of a promised five-year tax rate reduction. Over time, the total reduction will make homeownership in Baltimore more attractive to people living outside of the city.

Just as our recent prosperity has allowed us to provide much needed tax relief to residents, we are also available to increase resources for critical city agencies and services:

- Creating 23 leadership positions at city recreation centers.
- \$163 million towards improving the efficiency of the Patapsco and Backwater Wastewater Treatment Plants.
- \$4.2 million for the Affordable Housing Fund.
- Pay increases for Police, Fire and Emergency personnel.
- \$700,000 dedicated to cleaning vacant properties.

In addition, this budget reflects our dedication to improving educational opportunities for Baltimore's young people. The city will exceed its State-mandated contribution to the Public School System by \$6.8 million. This equates to an additional \$84 per pupil.

By funding critical services and improving educational opportunities for children, I am confident that we can continue to make Baltimore a great city for current and future residents. If you would like to read the Preliminary Budget Plan for 2008, visit the [Baltimore City Department of Finance](#).

As always, I am interested in what you think about our plan to make our city a more attractive place to LIVE, EARN, PLAY and LEARN. Please [email me](#) your comments or suggestions.

Sincerely,

Sheila Dixon  
Mayor  
Baltimore

## **Volunteers Needed for 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Flowermart**

*"It truly is a microcosm of wonders."*

Are you interested in volunteering at this year's Flowermart?

This fabulous two-day event will be celebrating it's 90th year this year. We need volunteers to assist with a wide variety of tasks. If you have a particular interest in neighborhood cleaning and greening, it would be great to have you there.

Please go to <http://www.flowermart.org/volunteers.html> for more information.

### **Jones Falls Trail Garden**

**April 3, 2007**

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

The Jones Falls Trail  
Trailhead across from the Stieff Silver Building  
800 Wyman Park Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21217  
(410) 396-0730

Join local volunteers in an effort to beautify Baltimore's trails. We will create a new garden at the bottom of the Jones Falls Trail switchback. Tools will be provided. No experience necessary. Meet new people, chat, and contribute something to the beautification of Baltimore.

### **Reptiles Galore**

**April 3, 2007**

12:00 noon – 2:00 p.m.

Carrie Murray Nature Center  
1901 Ridgetop Road  
Baltimore MD 21207  
(410) 396-0808

Explore the world of reptiles with our scaly residents, including some that are native to Maryland. Learn about their adaptations, eating habits, and the various climates in which they live. Admission is \$1 per person. All ages are welcome.

## **Neighborhood Tree Steward Training**

**April 5, 2007**

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

James McHenry Recreation Center  
911 Hollins St.  
Baltimore, MD 21223  
(410) 396-0729

Join members of the Recreation and Parks' Tree Steward Program for a series of workshops on trees in an urban environment and how to take care of them. Recommended for ages 16 and older. The event is FREE and open to the public.

## **Tuesday Evening at Cylburn (Lecture)**

**April 6, 2007**

7:30 p.m.

Cylburn Arboretum Mansion  
4915 Greenspring Ave.  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
(410) 367-2217

Join Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks and the Baltimore Bird Club for a lecture on "Birding in Wales." Mike Bowen, past president of the Montgomery Bird Club, will give an overview of the outstanding natural areas of his native Wales. Using both photographs and audio clips, he will review the nearly 200 birds known to live in one of Britain's most scenic regions.

## **Getting in the "Swim" of Things**

**April 8, 2007**

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Cherry Hill Aquatics Center  
2600 Giles Road  
Baltimore, MD 21225  
(410) 396-1550

The Therapeutic Recreation Division wants everyone to get in the "swim" of things with our six-week Aqua Aerobics Program. This exciting new program is for adults with disabilities who live and work in the community or who attend adult day centers. The

Aqua Aerobics Program will provide participants with an opportunity to get in shape and have a really fun time while doing it. The program is FREE and open to anyone who loves the water. Day centers will be responsible for transportation and assistance. All participants should bring a towel and every swimmer will be required to complete a permission slip.

## **Nature Story Hour**

**April 8, 2007**

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Cylburn Arboretum  
4915 Greenspring Ave.  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
(410) 367-2217

Children, ages 3-6, are invited to hear stories about the natural world around them. Learn about insects, trees, flowers, birds and other wildlife in an informal setting just for pre-school age children. Weather permitting, a short nature walk will follow story hour. Admission is \$1 per child.

**To find more events in your community, visit Baltimore's Department of Recreation and Parks [Public Events Calendar](#).**

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